

# Helping Communities Plan for the Future

## A FY 2005 Annual Report from Growth Management Services

### Growth management works in Washington

Washington communities continued to make progress in their growth management planning during state Fiscal Year 2005. Growth Management Services, a program of the Washington State Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development (CTED), assisted communities in these efforts.

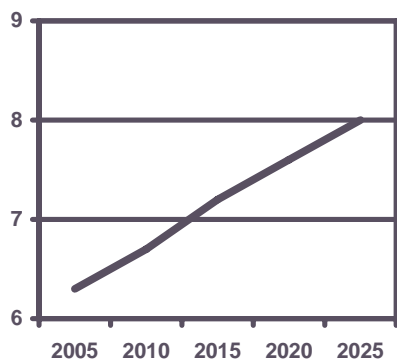
More compact urban development was built in large and smaller communities, helping reduce urban sprawl. Many Western Washington counties, such as Pierce, have directed an increasing amount of growth in urban areas rather than rural. Growth patterns in Washington state are changing.

Local governments received more than \$3.1 million in growth management grants during Fiscal Year 2005. This funding helped plan for economic development, critical areas protection, rural areas, capital facilities, transportation, and public involvement projects.

Growth Management Services staff also provided direct consultation and assistance to all 320 cities and counties in their planning work.

Many growth management challenges remain for local governments in their growth management planning. The state's population is expected to grow by nearly 2 million by 2025.

Washington Population Growth (in millions)



Communities will need to plan well for future growth that will dramatically change the state's built environment in the next 20 years. Growth Management Services will be there to help them.

Leonard Bauer, Managing Director  
Growth Management Services

### Growth Management Services' role

The Growth Management Act (GMA) was passed in 1990 to address uncoordinated and unplanned growth that posed a threat to the state's high quality of life. The department, through its Growth Management Services program, serves as the coordinator of the state's growth management efforts.



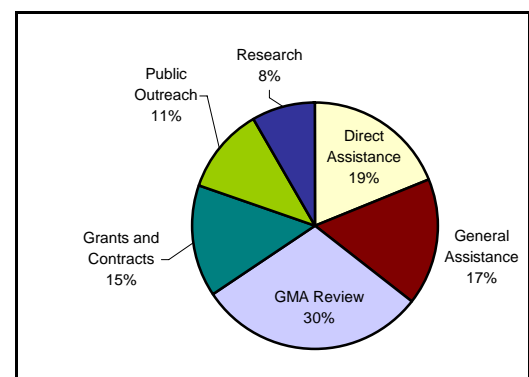
growth management efforts.

In addition to its coordination role, the program:

- Provides grants and personal planning assistance by its professional staff.
- Offers training and education to citizens and local government officials.
- Acts as a problem-solver by providing dispute resolution or helping groups find mediators.
- Reviews local plans and regulations for compliance with GMA requirements and makes suggestions on how to carry them out.
- Assists in collecting data on land uses, demographics, and infrastructure and reports on local achievements in meeting growth management planning goals.

During Fiscal Year 2005, Growth Management Services had 22 staff positions – 18 professional and four administrative support staff. This report summarizes the program's work from July 2004 to June 2005. The staff provides direct and general assistance, disperses grants, carries out research and data collection, and provides training and information.

Growth Management Service Areas  
(by percent of staff hours)



## General guidance — Helpful tools for cities and counties

### A better way to plan for sewers, bridges, parks

A new template for creating a capital facilities plan is available from the department. Developed in Microsoft Excel, it helps communities set priorities for capital projects and rate and rank them. The template offers a draft capital facilities plan that jurisdictions can fill in. Other tools are included for project management and presentations.

After completing a pilot project, Growth Management Services is offering training sessions.

Between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005, the department provided one-on-one training to 23 jurisdictions: Bingen, Connell, Coulee City, Everson, Goldendale, LaConner, Lakewood, Lyman, Mason County, Nespelem, Okanogan, Oroville, Pateros, Royal City, San Juan County, Skagit County, Skykomish, Snohomish, Snoqualmie, the Swinomish Tribe, Tenino, Tonasket, Union Gap, and Winthrop.

### Planning principles help communities

CTED led an effort to ensure that state participation in local planning activities is timely, helpful, and effective. Called correspondence principles, the actions are helping to minimize conflicts and resolve disagreements.

The principles benefit local governments, such as the City of Anacortes. When updating its critical areas ordinance, the process allowed the city to discuss and clarify issues with state agencies that would have otherwise threatened hundreds of jobs along the industrial waterfront.

State agencies and local government planning staff, with the help of the Association of Washington Cities and the Washington State Association of Counties, developed the principles.

Under an agreement signed by the departments of Agriculture, Health, Ecology, Transportation, Fish and Wildlife, Social and Health Services, and CTED, along with the Puget Sound Action Team, the eight agencies will:

- Work with local governments as early as possible when draft plans and amendments are being considered.
- Share draft comments with communities.
- Consider local concerns before letters are finalized.
- Designate an agency lead staff person to help resolve disputes between the agency and local governments.
- Make a clear distinction in letters between requirements of the law and state agency opinion over best practices.

### Publications news and notes

Growth Management Services distributed about 15,000 publications during Fiscal Year 2005. They included guidebooks, reports, the quarterly newsletter *About Growth*, fact sheets, and other publications.

To obtain growth management publications, call 360-725-3000 or see [www.cted.wa.gov/growth](http://www.cted.wa.gov/growth).

### Buildable lands work continues

The Buildable Lands Program monitors actual development in urban growth areas and compares it to planned densities. It's proving valuable in signaling areas where correction is needed as well as showing where plans are becoming a reality. The next reports, due in 2007, are expected to look more in depth at what corrective actions can be taken in those cases where the planned density isn't being achieved.

All six of the buildable lands counties and some of their cities received funds from the department's Growth Management Services' Competitive Grant process during Fiscal Year 2005. Most of the grants were used to update program information and automate development-permitting systems for greater reporting efficiency.

The City of Fife said that reporting that took days now can be done in 15 minutes. Additional work was done to improve the underlying assumption on which the five-year evaluation reports are based. Snohomish County conducted a survey to provide information on the "land-market availability" reduction factor, i.e., market factor. Pierce County produced a study, *Underdeveloped Land Assumption*, to better predict future supply of land in the urban growth area. Pierce and King counties conducted studies on how to increase the success of development regulations in meeting the goals of the comprehensive plans, termed "reasonable measures," within the Buildable Lands Program.

### New guidance on parks, clearing and grading, and historic preservation

A guidebook developed by Growth Management Services and the Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation, *Planning for Parks, Recreation, and Open Space in Your Community*, is helping communities plan for these important community amenities.

Parks and open space play a significant role in the state's growth management efforts to use limited land and resources

wisely and to reverse the trend of converting undeveloped land into sprawling, low-density land use.

Another new publication, *Technical Guidance Document for Clearing and Grading in Western Washington*, is providing assistance to local governments seeking to prevent the negative effects of clearing and grading on the environment and infrastructure.

To assist communities in their historic preservation efforts, Growth Management Services worked with the state Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation to update the guidebook *Historic Preservation: A Tool for Managing Growth*.



City of Tacoma

## Direct assistance — Working hand-in-hand with communities

### Helping communities achieve their goals through planning

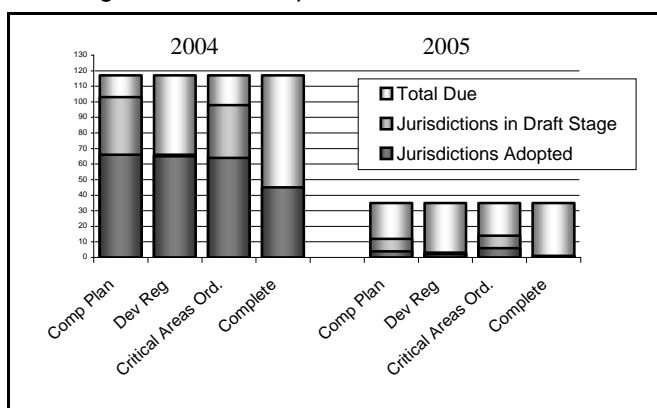
Growth Management Services' Review Team offers comments to local governments on their plans and regulations. It also coordinates state review of local plans and regulations.

### Database of statewide GMA actions

Between July 2004 and June 2005, CTED received 1,130 growth management documents for review. Of those, 11 staff comprehensively reviewed 481 and provided written comments on 112.

Many jurisdictions are in the process of reviewing and updating their plans and regulations. Growth management staff is assisting jurisdictions with this process. In Western Wash-

Progress on GMA Updates as of June 30, 2005



ington, 117 jurisdictions were required to complete their update by December 1, 2004. During the 2005 legislative session, the Legislature granted these jurisdictions until December 1, 2005, before their inability to complete the update would affect their eligibility to receive state financial assistance. Another 35 must complete their comprehensive plan and development regulations by December 1, 2005.

### Interagency teams and work groups

Growth Management Services organizes monthly meetings of the Interagency Work Group, which also includes the departments of Fish and Wildlife; Ecology; Transportation; Health; Social and Health Services; Natural Resources; and Agriculture plus the Puget Sound Action Team.

The group exchanges information about the technical assistance each agency provides to communities to assist in the review, evaluation, and update of plans and regulations.

Using interagency teams, Growth Management Services' planners coordinated joint meetings of state agencies and local governments to resolve issues in Jefferson, Skagit, King, Pierce, and Mason counties. This process avoided state concerns over King and Pierce counties' critical areas ordinances. Teams are assisting Snohomish and Island counties with protecting critical areas in agricultural lands.

### CTED staff assistance pays off

Growth Management Services' planners offer technical and financial assistance to help local officials interpret and carry out growth management requirements. During 2005 planners assisted:

- Local government planning staff and others with growth management updates through a series of workshops held throughout the state in May and June.
- Stevens and Pend Oreille counties in working toward the adoption of their first growth management compliant comprehensive plans.
- Staff for the Town of Rockford develop development regulations through direct technical assistance.
- Clarkston, Millwood, and South Cle Elum complete their first growth management plans and regulations.
- Sultan develop a downtown vision for 2020 through the American Planning Association Community Design Partnership.
- King County update its Critical Areas Ordinance.
- Pierce County revise its agricultural lands program.

### Community works on downtown revitalization, preservation of agricultural lands

The City of Burlington worked with Skagit County to produce a plan for revitalizing downtown Burlington and preserving the surrounding designated agricultural lands that are part of the cultural landscape – the Green Heartland.

Assistance was received from Skagitians to Preserve Farmland, a University of Washington Department of Landscape Architecture graduate student community design studio, and the department, which provided a \$20,000 emerging issues grant.

The project produced draft development regulations to offer details of how a transfer of development rights program would work.

Work on the project is on-going.

These partners are also helping plan a new future Town of Hamilton, which is relocating out of the Skagit River floodway, using a similar program of transfer of development rights. This program may provide some realistic options for flood threatened properties all along the Skagit River, reducing flood damage claims and potentially improving habitat corridors.



City of Burlington



## Grants — Growth management grants make a difference

### Communities reach goals with planning grants

About \$3.1 million was awarded to local governments during Fiscal Year 2005 to assist communities in hundreds of different ways in their growth management planning.

Grant funding was awarded to communities required to update their plans and regulations by December 2004. Grant amounts ranged from \$7,500 to \$90,000.

Competitive grants of \$1.2 million also were awarded.

Emerging issues grants helped communities to fund additional projects critical to carrying out their growth management work.

Here are examples of how the grants were used to enhance community living:

- **Cheney** updated its central business district plan, re-



vised related zoning, and developed a system to evaluate the health of the district so progress can continue in the city's downtown revitalization.

- **Soap Lake** created a downtown master plan for the city, to ensure that proper planning takes place to prepare for anticipated growth.
- **Cashmere** developed a model Economic Development Element that can be used by other communities based on their strengths and weaknesses, as identified through a public process.
- **Leavenworth** developed a Critical Areas Master Plan using the best available science and a landscape analysis tool to create a green infrastructure plan to address city issues, including urban growth area water problems.
- **Rock Island** revised its plan and regulations to respond to recent growth-related issues that made previous documents inadequate.
- **Medical Lake** developed a corridor plan for State Route 902 to improve the quality of its downtown.
- **Pomeroy** revised its Critical Areas Ordinance to better protect the city's critical areas.
- **Spokane** developed a Main Street Organizational Model for use in Spokane's 20 designated mixed-use centers and corridors to provide for compact urban development.

### Here's how grants help communities

Local officials offered these comments about their growth management grants:

- **Selah** received a competitive grant to develop an economic development plan. "We cannot express our delight in how this project has evolved and to the role CTED played in what shaped up to be a very successful plan – not a plan that sits on our shelf but one that has already gone into implementation." **Frank Sweet, City Supervisor, City of Selah**
- **Pierce County** received a \$100,000 competitive grant to refine its Buildable Lands Program. "The grant provided resources to address county-wide coordination, annual development data requirements, underdeveloped land assumptions, and reasonable measures." **Dan Cardwell, Senior Planner**
- **Mountlake Terrace** used its \$15,000 competitive grant to "update its land use data and establish an electronic system to track development, development constraints, and land supply." **Paula Schwarts, Associate Planner**
- **Wenatchee** used its \$35,000 grant to create a subarea plan for the waterfront. "The subarea planning for the waterfront was an exciting project for the city. The city matched the GMA funds with funds from the Chelan County Public Utility District to hire Makers Architects and Berk and Associates. The plan was such a successful process that it was recognized by the Washington Chapter of the American Planning Association for a Merit Award in 2004." **David Stalheim, Community Development Director**



- **Douglas County** received a \$70,000 competitive grant to develop a public process with East Wenatchee to identify issues in urban growth area neighborhoods. The grant assisted the county and city "communicate with neighborhood areas to better ascertain constituent priorities – sidewalks, street lights, transportation congestion." **Mark Kulaas, Land Services Manager**

## Public outreach — Getting growth management information to those who need to

### Using satellite imagery to study growth

Growth Management Services and the University of Washington's Northwest Center Livable Communities funded a study conducted by the university's Urban Ecology Research Lab to investigate monitoring changes in the landscape to determine the effectiveness of growth management policies.

Specific measures that could be detected with satellite imagery were associated with eight of 14 growth management goals. The study was able to detect significant change in landscape, such as the characteristics of increasing density in urban growth areas. Additional study will be needed to determine if these changes can be associated with changes in public policies.

The project focused on the Central Puget Sound region, although by limiting the study to using satellite imagery and census data, the methods could be applied statewide. The final report will be available in early 2006.

### Growth benchmark system being developed

Growth Management Services is working with the Northwest Center For Livable Communities to develop a benchmarking system to measure the progress in reaching the 14 goals of the Growth Management Act.

The center offered a workshop at which state leaders, including representatives from agencies and organizations that collect and maintain the data that would be used for such a program, met. At the workshop, a set of potential indicators was discussed. Workshop participants generated indicators for each growth management goal and discussed the availability of data for each of them.

The center is in the process of raising funds to hire staff to continue work on the benchmarking system.

### Conferences offer an important opportunity to reach public

Growth Management Services:

- Sponsored sessions at the Planning Association of Washington's Spring 2005 Conference in Spokane. More than 150 people attended.
- Co-sponsored the affordable housing conference, Housing Washington 2005, along with other department divisions and the Housing Finance Commission. More than 630 people attended the Spokane conference.
- Organized four regional, quarterly planning forums; three in Western Washington and one in Eastern Washington. At the forums, local planners share information and successes.
- Co-sponsored the 2005 conference of Washington Chapter of the American Planning Association in Bellevue. More than 600 people attended.

### Legislative support: Bills reviewed by staff on land use issues

During the 2005 session, staff evaluated 204 bills. Top issues included:

- Agricultural lands – 16 bills: three became law.
- Annexation – seven bills.
- Critical areas – 33 bills: three became law.
- Hood Canal – seven bills: two became law.
- Limited areas of more intense rural development/rural – four bills: one became law.
- Timelines – ten bills: one became law.

### Growth Management Web site

Growth Management Services' Web site continues to be one of the most popular CTED Web sites in its volume of hits. Several of the new growth management guidebooks account for 30 percent of all agency downloaded documents during a three-month time period. An extensive collection of research materials can be viewed and downloaded through the site at [www.cted.wa.gov/growth](http://www.cted.wa.gov/growth). It supplies quick access to technical and financial resources.

### Short course draws local officials, citizens

The Short Course on Local Planning, a three-hour educational program, provides a basic overview of land use planning in Washington State.

Between July 2004 and June 2005 Growth Management Services sponsored 34 short courses: 14 in Eastern Washington and 20 in Western Washington.



More requests are being received for focused courses on special topics such as density and infill strategies, economic development, subdivision design, low impact development, and level of service standards.

The department has sponsored the course for more than 30 years, in collaboration with the Planning Association of Washington.

### State Legislature requests reports

Growth Management Services prepared three reports for the Washington State Legislature during 2005, *Annexations Under the Growth Management Act: Barriers and Potential Solutions*; *Agricultural Lands Study: Designations of Agriculture Lands in Chelan, King, Lewis, and Yakima Counties*; and *Local Government Project Permitting Study*.



# Growth management works in Washington — Local accomplishments under the Growth Management Act

## Communities making progress in updating plans, regulations

Local governments updating their comprehensive plans during 2005 examined a number of issues and used a variety of techniques in their work:

- Woodinville wanted its update to capture and reflect the vision, values, and interests of the community. Eight citizen advisory panels were formed.



DAHP

- Tacoma examined policies, mapping, and allowable densities for its historic district.
- Burien broke the task of updating the plan into packages, with a consultant focusing on transportation and writing new critical areas regulations.
- Bellevue updated its downtown plan.
- Kent offered a workshop on innovative housing techniques including cottage housing and clustering.
- Whatcom County is working to integrate its Critical Areas Ordinance and Shoreline Master Program updates with natural resources management planning processes that are also underway: watershed planning, salmon recovery, shellfish protection, and the Lake Whatcom Management Program. Through integration, consistency will be developed and unnecessary overlaps and gaps in environmental regulations eliminated.
- Castle Rock convened an economic needs forum to identify public friendly businesses and industry types. A market analysis was conducted.

## Waterfront planning underway

The City of Bellingham and Port of Bellingham have joined forces to redevelop 137 waterfront acres that the port acquired from Georgia-Pacific West Inc. Zoning will be changed from industrial to mixed use. Grants from the department are funding \$400,000 for a planning consultant with the port and city splitting the remaining \$72,626. The port received a \$2 million grant from the state for this initial planning, site preparation, and demolition work.

## Vancouver continues to blossom

During 2005, the City of Vancouver continued its downtown revitalization effort.

One mixed-use project was added in Esther Short Commons. The commons is an affordable housing project with 160 units for people who earn \$9 to \$13 an hour. The project has 12,000 square feet of retail which an 8,000 square-foot indoor, year-round Farmers Market anchors.



In June 2005, a new Hilton Hotel and Convention Center opened. The hotel has 226 room and 30,000 square feet of meeting space.



WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF  
COMMUNITY, TRADE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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